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E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON IRAQ

Summary

-- Lead stories in all papers today, June 1, highlight events in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and the Palestinian Territories, as well as King Abdullah's upcoming visit to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Editorial Commentary

-- "Who is behind this disarray and violence?"

Daily columnist Mohammad Amayreh writes on the op-ed page of semi-official, influential Arabic daily Al-Rai (06/01): "Why is this phenomenon of disarray and violence overtaking the Arab countries these days? Who is behind this killing and destruction that is taking place everywhere? Saudi Arabia witnessed a number of bombings.. Syria suffered from such actions . and Lebanon is now witnessing some cases of violence and unrest.. Jordan almost came to witness similar actions.. All this gives the impression, or is meant to give the impression, of the presence of an atmosphere of instability, insecurity, worry, tension and protest! All this is designed to indicate that there is a need to fight so-called terrorism, so that the American and Israeli occupations are no longer the only reason for instability and the absence of security and peace in the region. In addition, all this is designed so that political regimes would respond positively to the manufactured-in-America calls for reform and democracy.. If Washington is really serious about its democratic project, then why does it not start with the real reason for this violence, oppression and instability in the region, namely the Israeli presence and the Israeli occupation of Palestine? How can citizens believe America's claims when they see America's 'democratic' experience play out in Iraq? Is the Abu Ghraib prison not the best example of this democracy?

-- "The new American draft resolution and the story of sovereignty"

Daily columnist Yaser Za'atreh writes on the op-ed page of center-left, influential Arabic daily Al-Dustour (06/01): "It is evident that the new American draft resolution before the Security Council indicates a retreat on the part of the occupation; a retreat that came about neither as a result of international pressure nor as a result of the struggle of the esteemed members of the governing council, but rather as a result of the heroic resistance that has reshuffled the cards for the occupiers and turned their easy victory into a crisis in which the American President and his conservative right-wing team are drowning. This does not mean, however, that the occupation has admitted defeat in the face of the resistance and that it has decided to leave, rather that the occupiers are trying very hard to ease their burden without actually abandoning their core objectives in coming to Iraq, namely achieving total control of Iraq's capabilities and resources and then using it as a launching pad to take control of the entire Arab situation."

GNEHM